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The purpose of this study was to examine selected occupational status projections and the relationship between these projections and socioeconomic status (SES). Occupational status projections referred to predictive statements about the future lifetime job of the respondents. The occupational status projections included in the analysis were: (1) occupational aspirations--the lifetime job designated by the respondent as most desirable; (2) occupational expectations--the lifetime job the respondent expected to have; and (3) anticipatory deflection--the difference between the status level of the respondent's aspiration and expectation. The sample for the study consisted of 7,775 Negro and White high school sophomores living in nonmetropolitan areas of 5 southern states. Analysis of the data revealed the relatively low effect of SES on occupational status projections. When SES was not controlled, very high or high level occupations were desired by a majority and expected by either a majority or a large minority of respondents in each race-sex category. When SES was controlled, a moderate positive association was found between SES and aspiration and expectation levels. However, the general trend of aspirations and expectations of upper level occupations remained for all race-sex categories at all SES levels. (TL)

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS PROJECTIONS OF SOUTHERN YOUTH, BY RACE AND SEX

By

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and

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Paper presented at the annual Rural Sociological Society meetings, San Francisco, California, August, 1969.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is concerned with an examination of selected occupational status projections and the relationship between these projections and socio-economic status (SES).[1] Projections can be defined as predictive statements about behavior, attitudes, or beliefs at some future time. In the present case, the term occupational status projections refers to predictive statements in reference to a future lifetime job.

A great deal of research has been conducted in the South in this substantive area, most of it in the last decade. Unfortunately, the bulk of these past efforts are notable for their restricted scope, both in terms of the occupational status projections considered and the sampling designs employed.[2] The analysis reported here is based on data collected in connection with a cooperative research project[3] which represents a much needed improvement over past research efforts that have been generally local in nature.

Respondents

The sample involves high school sophomores living in nonmetropolitan areas of five southern states. Table 1 indicates the number of counties and schools included in the sample by state, and the race and sex composition of each state's sample. A broad spectrum of environmental backgrounds in the nonmetropolitan South is represented by the sample used here. County population range from less than 8,000 to more than 150,000, the percentage of the population who are rural varies from forty-six to 100, the percentage Negro from less than one to seventy-two, and the median family income by county ranges from $1,631 to $4,503.

Table 1. Composition of the Final Sample, by Sex and Race

State	Counties Sampled	Schools Sampled	MALES				FEMALES				Total[b] Respondents
			White		Negro		White		Negro		
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Alabama	4	19	972	92.7	77	7.3	968	90.9	97	9.1	2,114
Georgia	4	5	81	69.8	35	30.2	65	55.1	53	44.9	234
Mississippi	2	8	188	63.1	110	36.9	208	62.1	127	37.9	633
S. Carolina	21[a]	40[a]	1,472	69.1	657	30.9	1,413	64.5	779	35.5	4,321
Texas	3	23	145	59.7	98	40.3	131	57.0	99	43.0	473
TOTAL	34	95	2,858	74.5	977	25.5	2,785	70.7	1,155	29.3	7,775

[a]Originally, forty-six schools in twenty-four counties were included in South Carolina's sample. Six schools in three counties involving 1,455 respondents were excluded from the present analysis because they were located in Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Only nonmetropolitan youth are involved in the present research.

[b]A small number of respondents (37) were excluded from the present sample because they are nonwhites other than Negro.

Concepts and Measurements

Below are listed the occupational status projections included in the present analysis, and their operational definitions.[4] Socio-economic status (SES) is also operationally defined, since it is a key variable in the analysis. The questions used to elicit aspirations, expectations, and SES were open-ended. The basic questions are included below.

Occupational aspirations -- the lifetime job that the respondent designates as most desirable to him. ("If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you most desire as a lifetime kind of work?") It is a projections of the job he would most like to have. Occupational aspirations were measured in terms of four status levels: Very High; High; Moderate; and Low. These levels are the result of collapsing a modified census breakdown of occupational categories, as follows:

Very High	(Professional and technical)
High	(Glamour,* managerial, farmer and farm manager)
Moderate	(Clerical and sales, skilled)
Low	(operatives, unskilled laborer)

Occupational expectations -- the lifetime job that the respondent expects to have. ("What kind of job do you really expect to have most of your life?") Expectations were also measured in terms of the four status levels mentioned above. Occupational aspiration and expectation both focus on a future occupational position, but may differ significantly. An aspiration is desired; it implies a strong attraction toward the position. An expectation, on the other hand, may or may not involve such an attraction. The value of the distinction between aspiration and expectation is that it makes possible the analysis of

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*The "Glamour" category consists of professional entertainers and athletes.

those cases where the attraction may not be in evidence, through the use of the concept anticipatory deflection.

Anticipatory deflection -- the difference between the status level of an individual's aspiration and that of his expectation. The difference may be positive (expectation higher than aspiration), negative (expectation lower than aspiration), or zero (no difference). In the case of a positive or negative difference, it can be said that a respondent anticipates positive or negative deflection from his aspiration. Each of these indicate a possible lack of attraction, or weak attraction to the occupation expected, and may ultimately be related to the level of job satisfaction and work related frustration, assuming the expectation is actually attained.

Socio-economic status (SES) -- the status level of the occupation of the breadwinner in the respondent's family. ("What is the major job held by the main breadwinner of your home?") The status level categories are the same as those used for aspiration and expectation levels, except that unemployed breadwinners are included in the low category.

Objectives

This paper describes occupational status projections of a sample of tenth graders living in nonmetropolitan areas of the South. It describes the occupations they most desire, the occupations they expect, and the degree and kind of deflection they anticipate from the occupations they most desire. The primary objective is to develop empirical generalizations about occupational status projections, as related to SES, for adolescents in the nonmetropolitan areas of the South.

Preliminary Procedures

To determine the extent to which respondents from the five states involved could be considered as part of a regional sample with respect to both SES and occupational status projections, chi square tests of significance and the coefficient of contingency (C) were computed for each sex-race category by state. Tables 2 and 3 present the results of the preliminary analysis.

Table 2. Results of Statistical Analysis of the Association between State of Residence and Socio-Economic Status of Each Sex-Race Category

Types of Respondents	X^2	df	P	C	Conclusion
White Males	47.37	12	.01	.134	NS
White Females	45.76	12	.01	.130	NS
Negro Males	16.77	12	.20	---	NS
Negro Females	76.84	12	.01	.276	NS

While most of the relationships examined were statistically significant beyond the .01 level of probability, the degree of association between state of residence and SES or any status projection (as measured by C) was small. Although it must be conceded that state of residence is generally associated with some variation in SES as well as the occupational status projections of the respondents, the magnitude of the association is weak in all cases and very weak in most. The evidence supports the conclusion that for present purposes the respondents from the five states can be treated as a single sample. It is further concluded that this sample can be tentatively considered representative of Southern high school sophomores, because it represents the most comprehensive such sample to date in this area of research.

Table 3. Results of Statistical Analysis of the Association between State of Residence and Occupational Status Projections for Each Race-Sex Category

Occupational Status Projections by Race-Sex category	x^2	df	P	C
White Males				
Occupational Aspirations	93.87	12	.01	.182
Occupational Expectations	63.43	12	.01	.155
Anticipatory Deflection	67.59	8	.01	.161
White Females				
Occupational Aspirations	29.88	12	.01	.105
Occupational Expectations	74.11	12	.01	.164
Anticipatory Deflection	33.94	8	.01	.114
Negro Males				
Occupational Aspirations	32.50	12	.01	.184
Occupational Expectations	13.93	12	.50	----
Anticipatory Deflection	24.82	8	.01	.172
Negro Females				
Occupational Aspirations	77.33	12	.01	.253
Occupational Expectations	10.12	12	.70	----
Anticipatory Deflection	62.94	8	.01	.234

"No information" categories were eliminated from contingency tables to avoid zero cells.

Table 4 presents the distribution of SES within each race-sex grouping of the total sample. As might be expected, there are minor differences only between the sexes in each racial category. In terms of racial differences, about two-thirds of the Negro in contrast to little more than one-fourth of the white respondents fall in the low category of SES; well over one-third of the white and only about one-eighth of the Negro respondents fall in the two upper SES categories; and over one-third of the white compared to about one-fifth of the Negro respondents are in the moderate category.

Table 4. Socio-Economic Status of Southern Youth by Race and Sex

SES	WHITE		NEGRO	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Percent			
Very High	9.5	10.3	5.0	6.0
High	26.9	26.5	6.5	6.8
Moderate	35.4	34.4	19.3	21.2
Low	28.2	28.8	69.2	66.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	2,714	2,673	821	1,018
No Info	145	111	156	137
Total N	2,859	2,784	977	1,155

The white respondents can be characterized as predominantly middle-to upper-middle class, while the Negro respondents can be characterized as predominantly lower-class. This situation was expected since it is typical of the occupational distributions of Negroes and whites in the South[5] and it provided part of the rationale underlying the decision to control SES in the main analysis, under the assumption that SES would significantly affect occupational status projections.

GENERAL FINDINGS

Table 5 presents the occupational status projections of respondents without controlling for SES. Over one-half the respondents in each race-sex category aspire to occupations at the Very High or High level, and relatively few aspire to low level occupations. There is a general decline from aspiration to expectation levels, with higher proportions expecting than aspiring to the low level. Nevertheless, from one-third to one-half of each race-sex grouping expect to attain occupations at the very high or high levels. The decline from aspiration to expectation levels occurs only among a minority of respondents in each race-sex category; no more than one-third in any case. Two-thirds or more of the respondents in each category anticipate either no deflection from their aspiration levels, or positive (upward) deflection.

Most of the sex differences in occupational aspirations and expectations are identical for both races and are due to proportionately greater choice by boys of typically male jobs at the high occupational level, and by girls of typically female jobs at the moderate level. At least one of the differences is not of this type, however. Among whites, more males than females aspire to and expect very high occupations while the pattern is reversed for Negroes.

No clear sex patterns emerge for Negroes in anticipatory deflection, but among white youth males appear to be more optimistic in expecting to attain their aspirations.

A significant race pattern among the males is that proportionately more whites than Negroes aspire to and expect very high and high level occupations, and proportionately fewer aspire to and expect low level occupations. Among the females, racial patterns are not as consistent. More Negroes than whites

Table 5. Summary of Occupational Status Projections of Southern Youth, by Race and Sex

Occupational Aspiration & Expectation Levels	Occupational Aspirations				Occupational Expectations			
	White		Negro		White		Negro	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Percent							
Very High	45.1	44.9	37.5	49.0	34.9	29.4	28.1	38.1
High	20.9	7.7	16.3	6.7	15.2	2.7	14.2	3.2
Moderate	22.7	37.4	24.4	28.6	22.8	32.8	20.9	26.9
Low	8.4	9.1	15.2	13.9	16.5	30.7	22.5	25.3
No Information	2.9	0.9	6.6	1.8	10.6	4.4	14.3	6.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	2,858	2,785	977	1,155	2,858	2,785	977	1,155

Anticipatory Deflection	White		Negro	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Percent			
None	58.3	55.7	52.1	59.5
Positive	8.5	5.7	9.6	9.6
Negative	21.6	33.8	21.6	23.6
No Information	11.6	4.8	16.7	7.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	2,858	2,785	977	1,155

aspire to and expect high occupations, but while more Negroes than whites aspire to the low level, more whites than Negroes expect to attain low level occupations. This last racial pattern for females is related to the only significant racial pattern associated with anticipatory deflection; a higher proportion of white females anticipating negative deflection from their aspiration levels.

From this examination of the respondents' occupational projections, without reference to their socio-economic status, some general conclusions can be drawn. In terms of the current occupational breakdown in our society, they may be said to have unrealistically high aspirations and expectations. The fact that their expectation levels are somewhat lower indicates some recognition of objective opportunities as well as personal and social limitations, but barring an enormous increase in the number of upper level jobs in our occupational structure, the expectations of many of them are unlikely to be fulfilled. It should also be remembered that most of these respondents reside in low-income counties and are likely to be hampered by economic and social restrictions.

While the respondents in general may be viewed as optimistic with reference to their occupational status projections, there is a hierarchy of optimism among them. Negro females and white males tend to be the most optimistic, followed by white females and finally by Negro males, who are least optimistic. The factors involved both in their optimistic projections into the future and in the differences in their optimism can only be speculated upon here. The former pattern may be largely a function of the cultural pressures to succeed which emphasize income and occupational levels as THE indicators of success, as well as inadequate attention given to vocational guidance and counseling in

our society. The latter patterns are apparently a function of a complex of factors, some of which may be the middle-class characteristics of the white respondents of both sexes, the relatively easier assimilation into the occupational structure by Negro females compared to males, a greater degree of aggressiveness and sense of responsibility in the economic sphere among Negro than white females, and the recognition by Negro males of the greater obstacles which may still remain between them and occupational success.

These conjectures are admittedly not based on the data which provide little support for such conclusions, but they do appear to be within the bounds of common sense. In reference to the judgment of the respondents' projections as unrealistic, however, it should be acknowledged that a rapid expansion of upper level occupations in our society, however unlikely, is within the realm of possibility, and that the high aspirations and expectations of youth may themselves provide some impetus for the expansion of occupational opportunities at the upper levels.[6]

FINDINGS WITH SES INCLUDED

Statistical Analysis of Association between SES and Occupational Status Projections

A statistical analysis of the relationship between SES and each occupational status projection was carried out for each race-sex category. Chi square tests were made, using the .01 level of probability as the criterion of statistical significance, and C values were computed as estimates of the degree of relationship in those cases where statistical significance was found. Table 6 summarizes the results of the analysis. Statistically significant relationships at the .01 level of probability were found between SES and occupational aspirations and expectations for all race-sex categories except Negro boys. Coefficient of contingency figures indicate that the magnitude of the relationships, although generally small, is greater for whites than for Negroes. A weak, statistically significant positive relationship was found between SES and anticipatory deflection for white males only. The relationships between SES and aspirations as well as expectations were in the expected direction for all race-sex categories except Negro girls. Detailed descriptions of SES patterns are presented under each occupational status projection heading.

The analysis of each status projection, which follows, is presented in graphical form, with percentage distributions in tabular form for each projection included in an appendix. This procedure allows for a clearer illustration of patterns and avoids the confusion often associated with multi-variable tables.

Occupational Aspirations

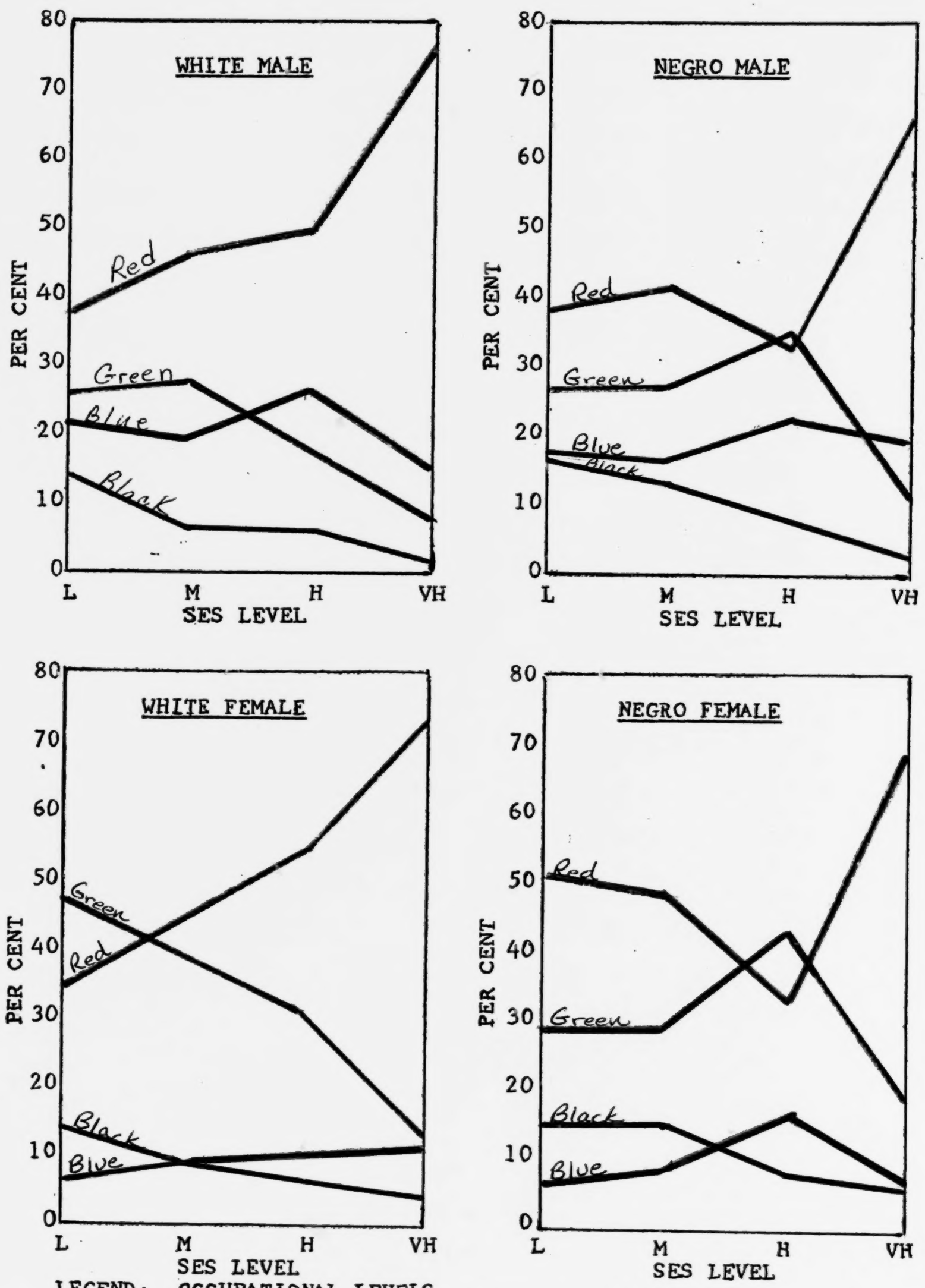
Figure 1 controls race and sex and facilitates examination of the general distribution of occupational aspirations among the respondents, as well as

Table 6. Results of Statistical Analysis of Occupational Status Projections of Each Race-Sex Category, by Socio-Economic Status

Occupational Status Projections by Race-Sex Category	X^2	df	P	C
White Males				
Occupational Aspirations	182.39	9	.01	.253
Occupational Expectations	294.44	9	.01	.327
Anticipatory Deflection	24.77	6	.01	.100
White Females				
Occupational Aspirations	200.89	9	.01	.264
Occupational Expectations	164.11	9	.01	.245
Anticipatory Deflection	8.76	6	.20	----
Negro Males				
Occupational Aspirations	19.33	9	.05	.155
Occupational Expectations	37.95	9	.01	.221
Anticipatory Deflection	4.64	6	.70	----
Negro Females				
Occupational Aspirations	30.06	9	.01	.170
Occupational Expectations	28.65	9	.01	.170
Anticipatory Deflection	16.07	6	.02	.126

"No information" categories were eliminated from contingency tables to avoid zero cells.

Figure 1. Per Cent of Each SES Level Aspiring to Each Occupational Level, by Race-Sex Category



examination of the association between SES and occupational aspirations. The red line in each graph represents the proportion of respondents in a given race-sex category aspiring to the very high occupational level for each SES level. The blue, green, and black lines in each graph represent the same thing for those aspiring to the high, moderate, and low occupational levels, respectively.

Some general patterns which hold for all race-sex categories can be discerned by looking at comparable lines in each graph. For example, in terms of proportions aspiring to given occupational levels, the very high line generally occupies the top position in each graph, while the low line generally occupies the bottom position. In other words, very high occupations are generally most popular and low occupations generally least popular, <u>regardless of race-sex category or SES level</u>. In addition, the moderate line in each graph is generally above the high line, indicating a general hierarchy of popularity for all race-sex categories and SES levels with very high aspirations at the top, then moderate aspirations followed by high aspirations, with low aspirations at the bottom. We can conclude from this that the effects of the general cultural pressure to attain success occupationally are greater than the effects of the social differences associated with race, sex, or SES.

There are some minor deviations from the overall pattern which do not invalidate the generalizations made above, but do call for plausible explanations. For Negroes of both sexes at the high SES level and for white females at the low SES level, somewhat higher proportions aspire to moderate than to very high occupations. For Negro males, the reason for the deviation is a much greater attraction than white males for skilled occupations evident among the high

SES group.* Whether this is a statistical peculiarity due to sampling procedures, or the result of a tradition of craftsmanship originating in the near monopoly of skilled crafts by Negroes in the ante-bellum South,[7] or the result of undetermined factors, is not clear. For females of both races the explanation lies in a strong attraction to the traditionally female clerical and sales occupations. Among the whites, the attraction is strongest in the low SES group, and among the Negroes in the high SES group.

The fact that proportionately more white males in the upper two SES levels and more Negro males in the very high SES level aspire to high level than to moderate level occupations is indicative of a fairly strong attraction to managerial positions and business ownership that does not exist for girls. The weakness of the attraction of these occupations for females of both races is illustrated by the positions of the high curves in both lower graphs and the fact that they are even below the curve for low aspirations for the lower SES groups.

Perhaps a clearer picture of some of these patterns can be gained by examining Figure 2, which controls SES while measuring proportions aspiring to each occupational level. In this figure, the lines in each graph represent race-sex categories. Glancing at each of the graphs in Figure 2, the most striking common characteristic is the N shape of most of the curves, indicating a general preference for moderate over high level occupations. On closer examination, however, it becomes obvious that the N shape is more pronounced for females of both races than for males, and that it is absent for white males in both the

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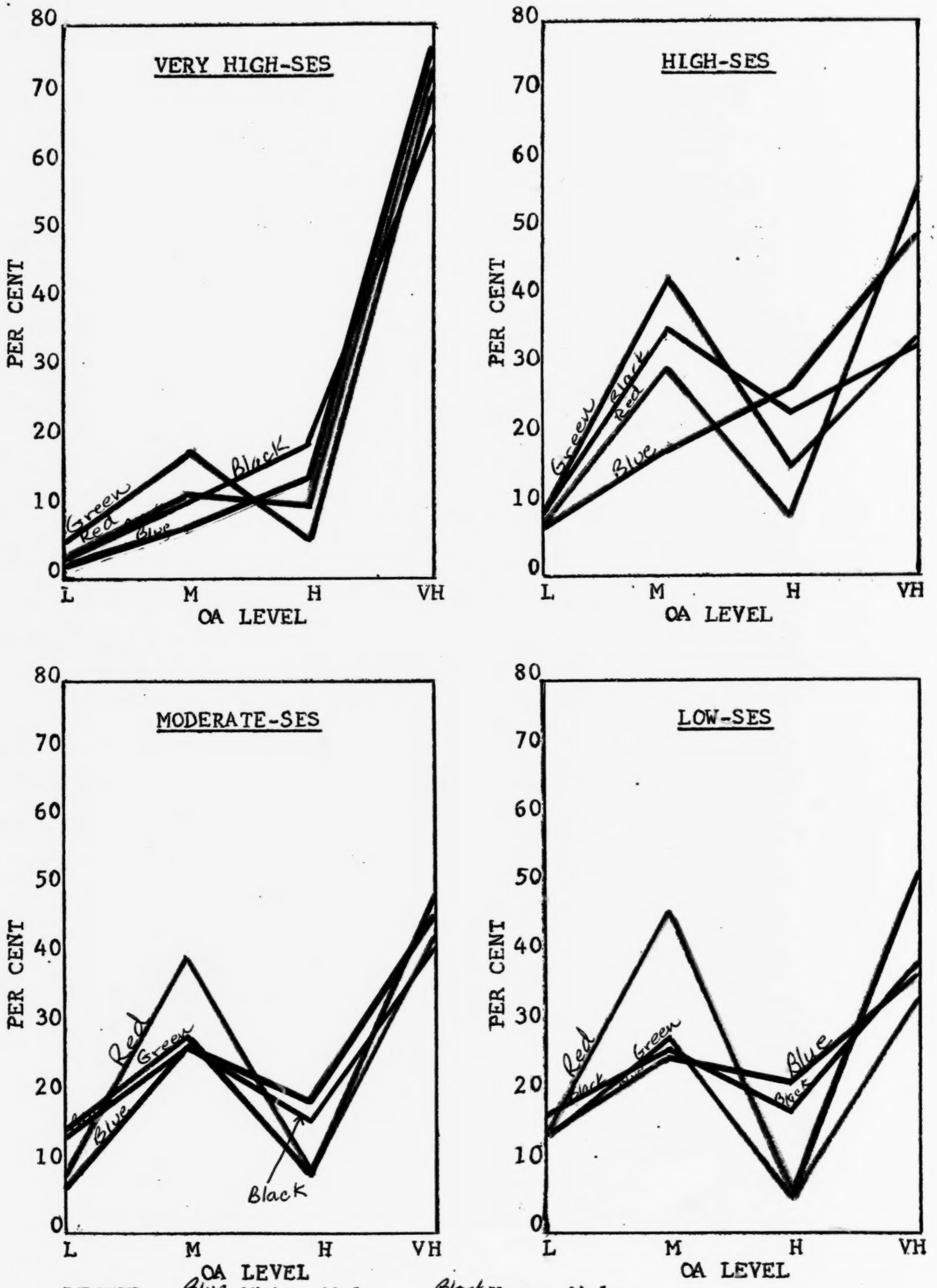
*This finding as well as others to follow (involving specific categories within an occupational level) are derived from an analysis of occupational aspirations and expectations using the detailed breakdown of occupational categories that was collapsed into the four-level scheme used in the present analysis.

Figure 2. Per Cent of Each Race-Sex Category Aspiring to Each Occupational Level, by SES Level



high and very high SES groups as well as for Negro males in the very high SES group. The explanations for these patterns have been given above.

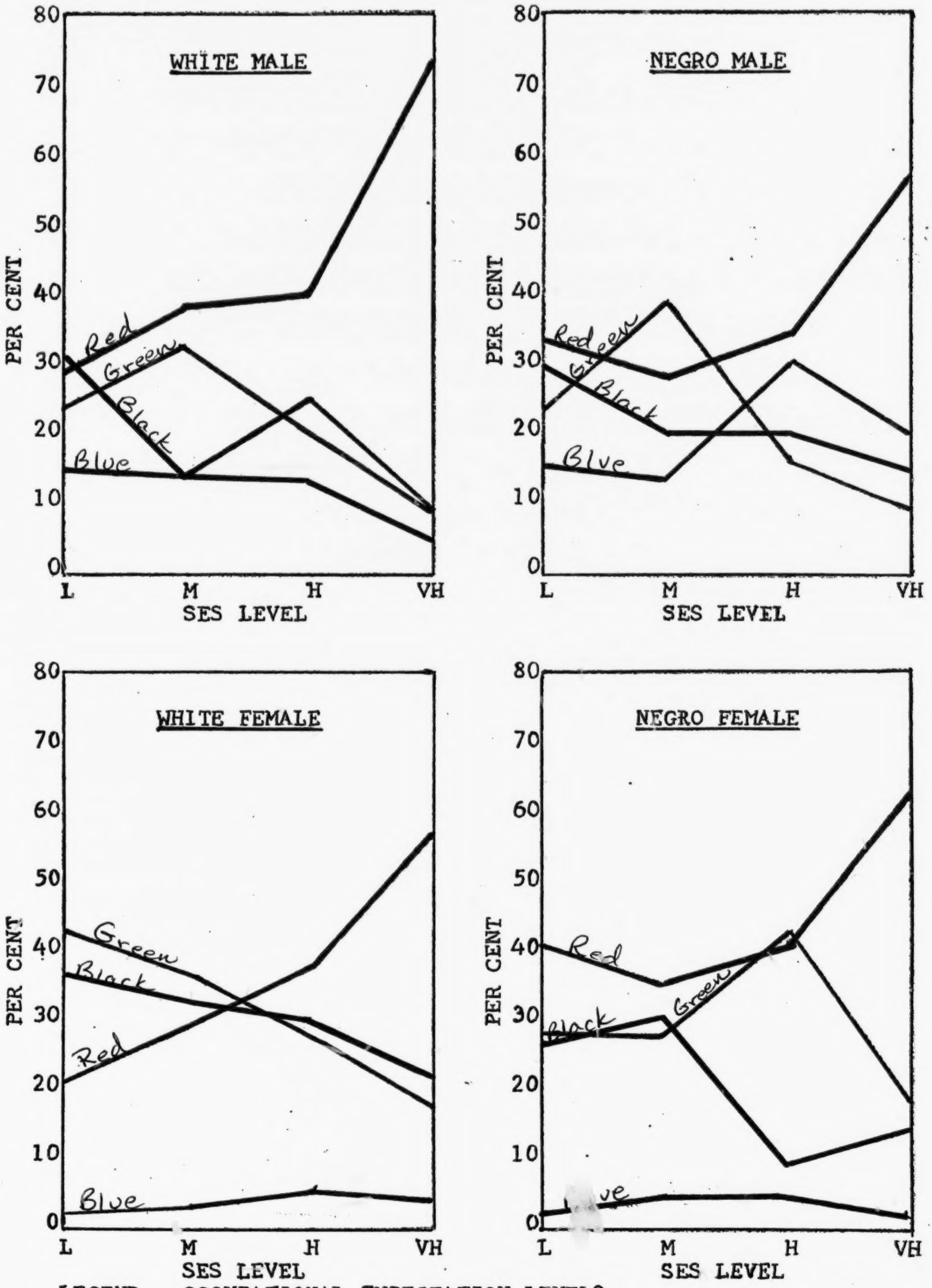
Another observation that can be made from Figure 2 is that, except in the high SES graph, the curves for males are similar to each other and differ noticeably from the curves for females, which are also generally similar to each other. The obvious conclusion is that the effects of sex on occupational aspirations are generally greater than the effects of race. The deviation by Negro males in the high SES group is again explainable in terms of the strong attraction to skilled occupations by these respondents.

Occupational Expectations and Anticipatory Deflection

Because occupational expectations represent modifications of aspirations resulting from the respondents' recognition of personal, social, and economic obstacles in the way of attainment, it is convenient to present the analysis of expectations concomitantly with that of anticipatory deflection. The latter variable, as noted in the introduction above, is a measure of the difference between aspiration and expectation levels.

Figure 3 illustrates the proportions of each SES level expecting to attain given occupational levels, with race and sex controlled. As in Figure 1 for occupational aspirations, each graph represents a race-sex category and the lines in each graph represent occupational levels: red for very high, blue for high, green for moderate, and black for low. Comparing Figure 3 with Figure 1 reveals that, while there are relatively minor differences in the shapes of the respective curves, there are notable shifts in the positions of the curves from Figure 1 to Figure 3.

Figure 3. Per Cent of Each SES Level Expecting at Each Occupational Level, by Race-Sex Category



The general similarities in the shapes of the expectation and aspiration curves at the various occupational levels indicate that the effects of SES on occupational expectations are not substantially different from its effects on occupational aspirations. This is not to say that there are no differences at all. The coefficient of contingency values in Tables 6 above indicated a somewhat stronger association between SES and expectations than aspirations for males of both races. This increase in the magnitude of the association shows up quite clearly, when the curves of Figures 1 and 3 are overlaid, as the results of a diffused general pattern. That is, as SES increases, there is a slightly stronger or more consistent increase in proportions expecting than aspiring at the very high and high occupational levels and a slightly stronger or more consistent decrease in proportions expecting than aspiring at the moderate and low occupational levels. The fact that this pattern does not appear among females seems to indicate that SES is not one of the reality factors (personal, social, and economic obstacles to attainment of aspiration levels) modifying choice of occupational level for girls, although it is for boys in a relatively minor way.

It should be emphasized that the general similarities in the shapes of the aspiration and expectation curves for all respondents are considered of greater importance than the differences just discussed among males. In terms of our opening statement in this section of the paper, SES does not appear to be recognized as a major obstacle to attainment of aspirational levels by the respondents in general, although the male respondents do give it nominal recognition.

The shifts in the positions of the curves in Figure 3 as compared to Figure 1 indicate a general and significant decline in occupational levels expected as opposed to those desired. This provides evidence that obstacles (other than SES) to the attainment of aspirations are being acknowledged by at least some of the respondents. Before proceeding with a more detailed analysis of the shifts involved, it is useful to take a look at the proportions of respondents anticipating deflection from aspiration levels.

Figure 4 illustrates the proportions of each race-sex category anticipating no deflection (red), negative deflection (blue), and positive deflection (green) from their aspiration levels. It is obvious that a majority of respondents expect to attain their aspirations. For each race-sex category, a notable minority expect negative deflection (expectation level lower than aspiration level) while a small minority of each expect higher level occupations than those to which they aspire. Since the association between SES and anticipatory deflection is statistically significant only for white males, and then the magnitude of the association is very small (see Table 6, above), SES patterns will not be discussed. Proportionately more white females anticipate negative deflection than any other category, but the general similarities among race-sex categories again tend to overshadow the minor differences.*

While Figure 4 has illustrated proportions of respondents anticipating deflection, either positive or negative, from their aspirations, Figure 5 represents proportionate gains or losses (from aspirations to expectations) for each race-sex category at each occupational level. It illustrates the

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*It should be noted that the extent of anticipatory deflection is largely a function of the number of occupational categories used to measure aspirations and expectations. A more detailed breakdown of occupations than the four-level scheme used here would result in greater anticipatory deflection than we have noted.

Figure 4. Per Cent of Each Race-Sex Category Anticipating No Deflection, Negative Deflection, and Positive Deflection from Their Aspiration Levels, by SES

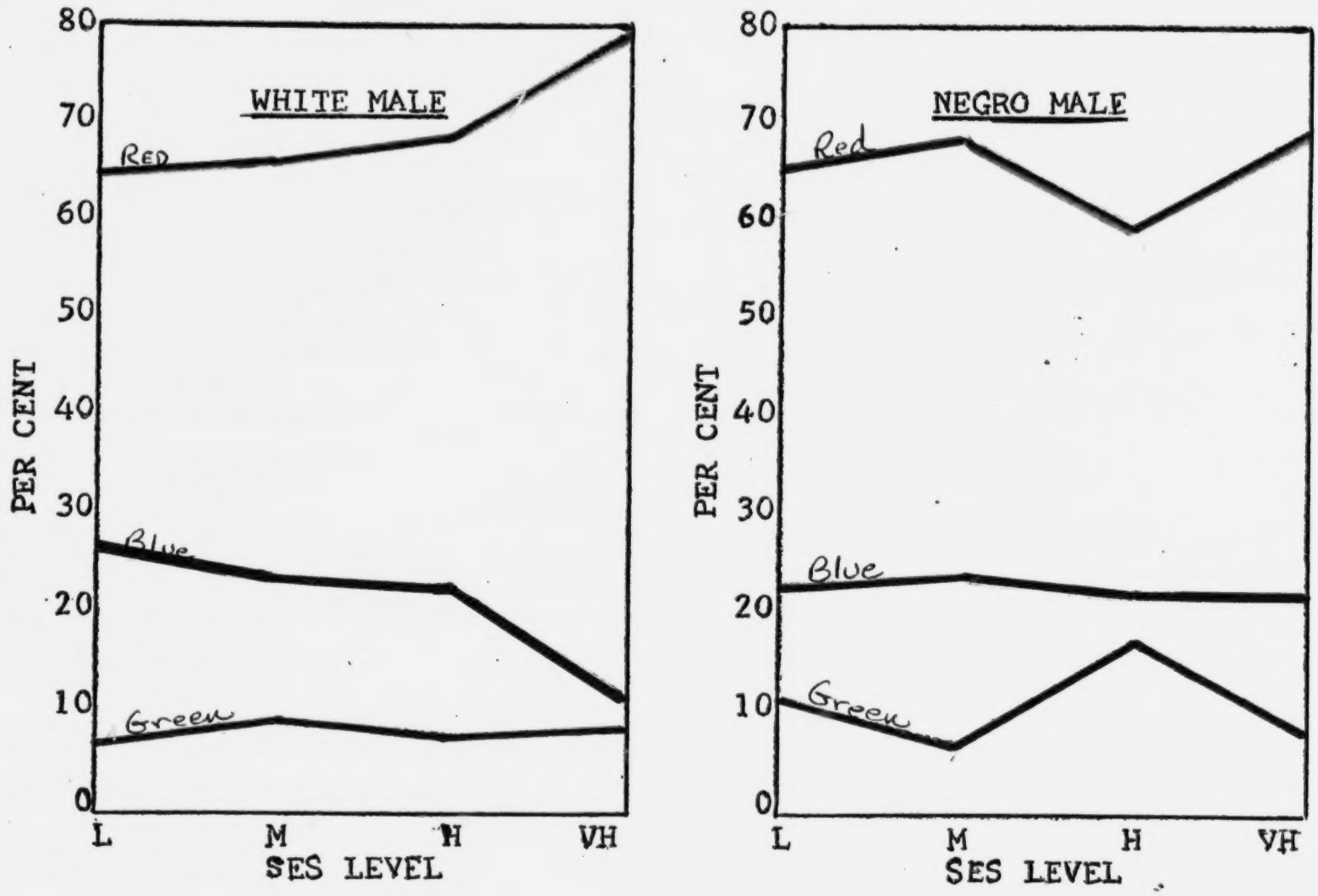
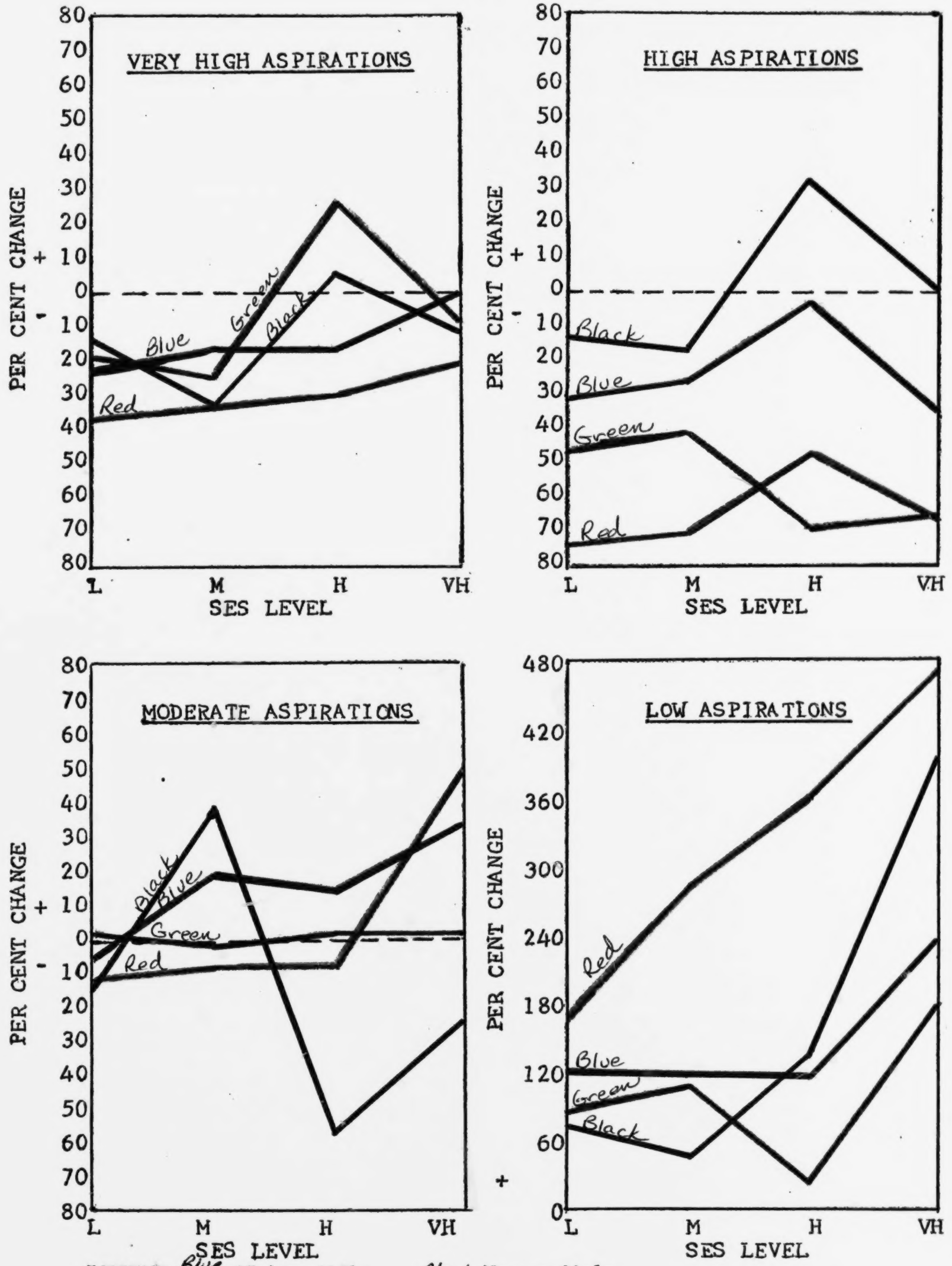


Figure 5. Per Cent and Direction of Change From Aspirations to Expectations, for Each Occupational Aspiration Level, by SES Level and Race-Sex Category



nature of the shifts in the expectation curves relevant to the aspiration curves that were discussed above.

Each of the graphs in Figure 5 represent a given occupational level and the curves in each graph represent the percent change and direction of change from aspirations to expectations in the given occupational level for the four race-sex categories. It will be noted that each of the graphs except the one for low aspirations has a zero point on its vertical axis, with a positive (+) range above it and a negative (-) range below it. The low aspiration graph has no negative range because for each race-sex category more respondents expect such occupations than aspire to them. In addition, the vertical scale on the latter graph has a much wider range than the others to accommodate the much greater proportional increases.

A brief examination of Figure 5 reveals that, in general, the curves in the upper two graphs fall in the negative range, those in the low aspiration graph are all in the positive range, while those in the moderate aspiration graph are somewhat ambiguous. This illustrates the general decline in occupational levels from aspirations to expectations noted above. Compared to aspirations, fewer respondents expect very high or high level occupations and more expect low level occupations. There are several race and sex differences which are worth noting.

To begin with, the decline in proportions at the upper two occupational levels are greater for white females than for white males, while the increase in proportions at the low occupational level is much greater for the white females. Although there is a general modest increase in the proportion of males at the moderate occupational level, there is a general modest <u>decline</u> for the white females. Among the Negro respondents, sex differences are

generally more complex. At the very high occupational level, the decline in the proportions of males is generally slightly greater than for females, while the increase in proportions at the low occupational level is generally greater for males than females. In addition, although there is virtually no change for Negro females at the moderate occupational level, for the males there are decreases ranging from slight to substantial at all SES levels except moderate, where there is a notable increase.

These findings indicate that, in general, reality factors (personal, social, and economic obstacles to attainment of aspiration levels) are most important to white females and least important to Negro females, with males of each race falling somewhere in between. The great differences between white and Negro girls may well be the result of different attitudes toward being a housewife as an alternative occupation.* While the present data cannot substantiate the conclusion, a more detailed analysis has indicated that considerably more white females are probably deflected from their aspirations to the occupation of housewife than are Negro females. This would account for both the lower proportions of Negro than white females deflected from all occupational levels, and for the much greater increase in white females at the low level. It seems that being a housewife may not be viewed by Negro girls as an occupational alternative.

Taking a final look at Figure 5, the peaks in the upper graphs at the high SES level are of significance. Since this SES level roughly corresponds to what is generally considered the middle-class, these peaks provide evidence of a stronger attraction for upward mobility among middle-class Negroes in our

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*"Housewife" was included in the unskilled occupational category included here in the low occupational level.

sample and a corresponding stronger resistance to downward mobility among middle-class respondents generally. The atypical shape of the curve for high SES Negro males at the moderate occupational level, when considered in conjunction with the peak for this SES level at the high occupational level, is also significant. What it apparently means is that the influence of the pressures to maintain or improve one's status is greater for these respondents than the attraction for skilled occupations which was evident in their occupational aspirations.

SUMMARY AND RELATION TO PAST RESEARCH

Summary

An important finding evolving from the present analysis is the moderate, and sometimes absent, effect of socio-economic status on occupational status projections. When SES is not controlled, very high or high level occupations are desired by a majority and expected by either a majority or large minority of respondents in each race-sex category. When SES is controlled, a moderate positive association is revealed between SES and aspiration and expectation levels (clearest for white females), but the general concentration on upper level occupations remains for all race-sex categories at all SES levels.

For most race, sex, and SES categories, the aspirations of respondents indicate a general preference hierarchy with very high occupations most often chosen, followed by moderate occupations, then high occupations, and finally low occupations least often chosen. There are minor deviations from this general pattern which primarily represent the tendency for both males and females to be rather strongly attracted to occupations traditionally identified as suitable or appropriate for their respective sexes, and to be only moderately or weakly attracted to occupations traditionally considered unsuitable or inappropriate in terms of their sex. An unexpected deviation from the pattern by high SES Negro males is the result of an unexplained but apparently very strong attraction to skilled occupations.

The occupational expectations as well as anticipatory deflection of the respondents represent modifications of occupational aspirations in recognition of reality factors or obstables to attainment. An important finding in this regard is that almost two-thirds of the respondents, regardless of race, sex,

or SES, expected to attain their aspiration levels, while generally less than one-third expected to attain occupations below the level of their aspirations. It is also noteworthy that roughly five to fifteen percent expected to attain higher level occupations than those to which they aspired. In other words, only a minority of respondents in any race, sex, or SES category perceived obstacles to the attainment of their aspiration levels.

Among those perceiving obstacles, white females are most pessimistic and Negro females most optimistic (in terms of proportions expecting downward deflection from aspirations), with males of both races falling in between these extremes. SES apparently constituted a minor impediment for males, but not for females. Sex seems to constitute a perceived obstacle for white but not for Negro females. The data supply no evidence that race is perceived by these respondents as an obstacle to attainment of occupational aspiration levels. It should be noted that the bulk of the deflection from aspiration levels is due to perceived obstacles which remain unidentified because of the limitations of the data.

The general pattern of negative deflection from aspirations to expectations consists of fewer respondents expecting than aspiring to very high and high occupational levels and more respondents expecting than aspiring to the low occupational level. There are sex differences by race that indicate greater deflection from the very high occupational level and a greater increase in the low occupational level for females among the whites and males among the Negroes. The analysis of the current data, supported by a more detailed analysis not reported here, of the race differences among females, indicates that in contrast to white girls, Negro girls may not view being a housewife as an occupational alternative. In terms of obstacles to attainment, there may be internal

or external pressures on white girls to forgo other occupations in order to be a housewife which either do not exist for Negro girls or are superseded by other reality factors. Finally, the data suggest that middle-class (High SES) Negroes have a strong motivation for upward mobility and that middle-class respondents in general have a strong aversion to downward mobility. In the case of middle-class Negro males, the pressures for upward mobility and status maintenance effectively offset the strong attraction to skilled occupations among these respondents.

RELATION TO PAST RESEARCH

Previous research studies conducted in the South and focusing on occupational status projections were reviewed and their findings synthesized by the senior author.[8] Most of the studies involved respondents in only one state, and sex and race comparisons often were not made. The general impression is that little coordination and cooperation exists among researchers in this area of study. Nevertheless, the findings of the synthesis of past research are supported by and in turn lend support to the current findings. As in the present research, the synthesis indicated that a substantial minority if not a majority of the respondents, regardless of race and sex, aspire to very high level occupations, while relatively few aspire to the low level. Boys of both races aspire to the high and moderate level occupations in roughly equal proportions, while more girls of both races aspire to moderate as opposed to high level occupations. Occupational expectations of respondents were generally similar to their aspirations, except that proportions in the very high level decline while those in the low level increase. While most respondents anticipated no deflection from aspiration, a large minority anticipated negative deflection, and a few anticipated positive deflection.

The relationships noted in the present research between SES and occupational aspirations, expectations, and anticipatory deflection tend to support some past research findings and refute some others (the following is by no means a comprehensive review). Positive relationships between SES and occupational aspirations and expectations for white males found here support similar findings by Sperry and Kivett in North Carolina,[9] and Schwarzweller in Kentucky.[10] These two studies, however, found no relationship between SES and the occupational aspirations and expectations of white females, while the present effort did find such relationships.

The present finding of a positive relationship between SES and occupational aspirations of whites of both sexes supports similar findings of Youmans in Kentucky[11] and by Rhodes in Tennessee.[12] The present findings of a positive relationship between SES and occupational expectations of white boys and girls supports similar results found by Grigg and Middleton in Florida.[13]

The present findings of no apparent relationship between SES and occupational aspirations for Negro males seems to refute the findings of a positive relationship in a study by Uzell in North Carolina,[14] although the difference may be a result of an urban sample in the latter.

The above indicates the direct significance of the present analysis for past research. Comparison of the present findings with those of past research broadens the previously local significance of the latter and provides support for some of the findings presented here. Because of the nature of the sample, the current findings are properly generalizable to Southern nonmetropolitan high school youth, and can therefore serve as tentative regional generalizations.

Reaching beyond generalizations about the rural South, our findings have a bearing on the contradictory hypotheses that stratification does and does not influence job expectations more than job aspirations. More than a decade ago Stephenson started this dialogue with a report of findings clearly indicating that the lower the social class of youth the more likely they were to expect a lower prestige job than they desired. Stephenson concluded from his investigation that "aspirations are relatively unaffected by class and, hence, reflect the general cultural emphasis upon high goal orientations, while plans or expectations are more definitely class based."[15] Recently Rehberg has re-evaluated Stephenson's hypothesis through a re-analysis of Stephenson's data coupled with findings accumulated from more recent studies and he concluded that Stephenson was wrong--aspirations and expectations both demonstrate positive correlations with social class.[16] Our data indicate that class, using measures similar to Rehberg's, is weakly correlated with both aspiration and expectation level. And, perhaps of greater significance, our data indicates--in contradiction to Stephenson--relatively little variation in anticipatory goal deflection by either SES or race. Consequently, we must conclude that our findings support Rehberg's contention that aspirations and expectations in general are influenced to about the same extent by class.* On the other hand, our findings indicate a much weaker correlation between class and occupational projections than does Rehberg's.

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*The lack of congruence between Stephenson's findings and others may be explained by the nature of the stimulus used to obtain responses. Stephenson used a question that included a very short-run projection for expectation--occupation intended at termination of schooling--coupled with a lack of specification of a time dimension for aspirations. The use of a comparable time span for both projections would have probably reduced the differences between aspirations and expectations. Also, although Rehberg does not indicate this, the extremely short time span used in the Stephenson stimulus question differentiates it from the longer time periods utilized in most other investigations (including ours) and may explain the contradictory sets of findings.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Conclusions

Examination of the occupational status projections of a large sample of young people reveals that their aspirations and expectations focus on the higher status occupations in our society. This situation is not compatible with the current distribution of occupations in the economy. The general pattern, which holds in spite of race, sex, or socio-economic status, provides firm support for the contention that there are strong cultural pressures to succeed in our society, while at the same time legitimate avenues to success are restricted.[17]

It seems clear that the cultural pressures to succeed are more than enough to overcome the very real limitations imposed by the minority status associated with Negroes and females and those imposed by limited social and economic backgrounds, at least in terms of desires and expectations. Whether or not this orientation toward success which is so effectively implanted in young people will culminate in compatible levels of achievement is another question entirely, and one which demands careful and sober consideration.

In an article critical of the approach equating classlessness with equality, Dennis Wrong refers to "...the invidious ranking of occupations with respect to prestige or status."[18] The functional necessity of stratification for the successful organization and operation of a society does not inevitably result in an "invidious ranking of occupations," but it would be difficult to deny that such distinctions are common in our society. We have become accustomed to evaluate, not only occupations, but the people in them as well, almost exclusively in terms of status indicators. We have come to "believe" in the appropriateness and even the moral legitimacy of the symbols of our stratification system, and this misplaced faith is slowly eating away at the foundations of the system itself. We

have a tendency to venerate academic degrees rather than learning, and size of income rather than accomplishments. We are rapidly losing respect for the dignity and worth of labor divorced from consideration of the status level at which it is performed. The scope of these trends is indicated by the data analyzed here. The young people in the sample have successfully internalized the attitudes of society with respect to desirable occupations. The reward for this acceptance of societal values for many of them will likely be chronic dissatisfaction with their work lives.

Suggestions for Future Research

Sociologists have been prolific researchers into the occupational aspirations, desires, goals, expectations, plans, and other similar projections of youth. Much of this research has been conducted over the past decade, and all of it is based on the implicit assumption that these projections are important, presumably for occupational attainment. The few studies that have focused on the effects of these projections on subsequent occupational attainment, however, indicate that aspirations are not very good predictors of occupational attainment.[19]

Occupational desires and expectations of youth seem to be escalated by cultural pressures to succeed. In light of the restrictions of our current occupational structure and the lack of evidence that occupational status projections are good predictors of attainment, some suggestions come to mind for the future focus of this area of research.

Up to the present, the bulk of the research in this area has consisted of surveys of the occupational status projections of youth. The findings of the

present regional study and the review of past research in the South indicates that valid generalizations can be derived from existing data. In a real sense, we have a valid profile of the projections of youth in this area. There are obvious gaps in the profile which will necessitate subsequent efforts designed specifically to fill the gaps. For instance, a synthesis marshalling past data, or the collection of new data, would facilitate a comparative analysis of projections for metropolitan versus nonmetropolitan youth. Another example might be a study employing more detailed measurement categories (perhaps North-Hatt scores) to allow for more sophisticated statistical techniques leading to a more detailed examination of the profile we now have. These are important considerations for the direction of future research, but they are essentially refining efforts. The point here is that they should preoccupy only a fraction of the resources in the research area.

There are more pressing matters that should determine the utilization of the bulk of the resources in this area of research. If aspirations and expectations cannot predict attainment, what can? To what extent are aspirations necessary, if not sufficient, for attainment of a given occupational level? What is the complex of factors determining aspirations and expectations? How and to what extent can these factors be altered to change aspiration and expectation profiles, and what is the advisability of doing so? What are the costs to individuals and society of altering aspiration and expectation profiles? These are some of the crucial questions that sociologists might fruitfully concern themselves with. Pieces of some of the answers are buried in the literature waiting to be fitted together by those attracted to efforts at synthesis. Other pieces will have to be collected by those more inclined toward empirical efforts.

While the suggested task may be extensive, it is one which can be very fruitful. The ultimate objective should be a comprehensive theory of occupational status attainment leading to a predictive model for attainment. The impact of such a theory on occupational sociology in general and on the manpower problems that plague our society would be worth the efforts.

FOOTNOTES

1. Based on an unpublished master's thesis: Michael F. Lever, "Selected Occupational Status Projections of Southern Youth: An Analysis by Sex, Race, and Socio-Economic Status," Department of Agricultural Economics and Sociology, Texas A&M University, 1969.

2. A comprehensive review of this research is reported in Lever, op. cit., Chapter II.

3. Southern Regional Project S-61, "Human Resource Development and Mobility in the Rural South," sponsored by the agricultural experiment stations of the participating states.

4. The conceptual framework from which these concepts are abstracted is developed in William P. Kuvlesky and Robert C. Bealer, "A Clarification of the Concept 'Occupational Choice,'" Rural Sociology, 31 (September, 1966), pp. 265-276; and more fully in William P. Kuvlesky, "The Social-Psychological Dimensions of Occupational Mobility," Proceedings of the National Vocational-Technical Seminar on Occupational Mobility and Migration, Raleigh: North Carolina State University, Center for Research, Training, and Occupational Education, April, 1966.

5. U. S. Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population: 1960 Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary; Final Report PC (1)-1D. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1963, Table 257.

6. Walter L. Slocum, Occupational Careers, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1966, p. 189.

7. George E. Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities, 3rd ed., New York: Harper & Row, 1965, p. 99.

8. Lever, op. cit.

9. Irwin V. Sperry and Vira R. Kivett, Educational and Vocational Goals of Rural Youth in North Carolina, Greensboro: North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin No. 163, November, 1964.

10. H. K. Schwarzweller, Sociocultural Factors and the Career Aspirations and Plans of Rural Kentucky High School Seniors, Lexington: Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, Progress Report 94, September, 1960. (Mimeographed.)

11. E. G. Youmans, The Educational Attainment and Future Plans of Rural Youths, Lexington: Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 664, January, 1959.

12. L. Rhodes, "Anomia, Aspiration, and Status," Social Forces, 42 (May, 1964), pp. 434-440.

13. C. M. Grigg and R. Middleton, "Community of Orientation and Occupational Aspirations of Ninth Grade Students," Social Forces, 38 (May, 1960), pp. 303-308.

14. O. Uzell, "Occupational Aspirations of Negro Male High School Students," Sociology and Social Research, 45 (January, 1961), pp. 202-204.

15. Richard M. Stephenson, "Mobility Orientation and Stratification of 1,000 Ninth Graders," ASR, 22 (April, 1957), p. 212.

16. Richard M. Rehberg, "Adolescent Career Aspirations and Expectations: An Evaluation of Two Contradictory Stratification Hypotheses," (State University of New York, Binghamton--Mimeo).

17. Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, enlarged edition, New York: The Free Press, 1968, pp. 186-193.

18. Dennis Wrong, "Social Inequality without Social Stratification," reprinted in Celia S. Heller, Structured Social Inequality, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969, p. 514.

19. For reviews of these studies, see William P. Kuvlesky and Robert C. Bealer, "The Relevance of Adolescents' Occupational Aspirations for Subsequent Job Attainments," Rural Sociology, 30 (September, 1967), pp. 290-301; Joe M. Bohlen and Dean R. Yoesting, "Congruency Between Occupational Aspirations and Attainments of Iowa Young People," Rural Sociology, 33 (June, 1968), pp. 207-213; and William P. Kuvlesky, "Generalizations About the Relationship of Occupational Aspirations to Subsequent Attainment," Rural Sociology, 34 (March, 1969), pp. 95-97.

APPENDIX

Table A. Occupational Aspiration Levels of Southern Youth, by Socio-Economic Status

Occupational Aspiration Levels	WHITE MALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO MALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	37.7	46.4	49.4	76.5	38.6	42.1	33.3	66.7
High	21.7	19.1	26.5	14.6	17.6	16.4	22.9	19.4
Moderate	26.1	27.9	17.9	7.3	27.0	27.9	35.5	11.1
Low	14.5	6.6	6.2	1.6	16.8	13.6	8.3	2.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	819	902	683	247	564	140	48	36

Occupational Aspiration Levels	WHITE FEMALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO FEMALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	33.4	43.6	54.4	73.3	51.3	48.2	33.3	71.0
High	5.7	8.3	9.0	10.7	5.5	8.2	15.9	5.4
Moderate	47.3	39.6	30.1	12.2	28.6	28.7	42.9	18.2
Low	13.6	8.5	6.5	3.8	14.6	14.9	7.9	5.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	826	887	681	262	693	195	63	55

Table B. Occupational Expectation Levels of Southern Youth, by Socio-Economic Status

Occupational Expectation Levels	WHITE MALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO MALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	29.0	38.4	40.7	75.3	33.0	28.0	34.8	58.4
High	15.0	14.1	25.7	9.7	15.2	13.6	30.4	19.4
Moderate	24.4	33.2	20.3	9.7	22.9	38.7	15.2	8.3
Low	31.6	14.3	13.3	5.3	28.9	19.7	19.6	13.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	753	832	639	227	519	132	46	36

Occupational Expectation Levels	WHITE FEMALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO FEMALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	20.9	28.6	37.8	57.1	41.2	35.9	41.9	64.9
High	1.5	2.5	4.8	3.5	2.9	4.8	4.8	1.8
Moderate	41.6	36.4	27.5	17.8	28.7	28.3	43.6	18.5
Low	36.0	32.5	29.9	21.6	27.2	31.0	9.7	14.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	788	853	662	259	662	187	62	54

Table C. Anticipatory Deflection of Southern Youth, by Socio-Economic Status

Anticipatory Deflection	WHITE MALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO MALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
None	65.6	66.4	69.0	79.3	65.7	68.8	60.0	69.5
Positive	7.4	9.6	8.1	8.8	11.4	7.0	17.8	8.3
Negative	27.0	24.0	22.9	11.9	22.9	24.2	22.2	22.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	744	825	630	227	507	128	45	36

Anticipatory Deflection	WHITE FEMALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO FEMALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
None	59.1	57.7	61.9	64.6	67.7	60.2	69.4	74.0
Positive	5.8	4.6	5.6	5.8	8.8	8.1	17.7	9.3
Negative	35.1	37.7	32.5	29.6	23.5	31.7	12.9	16.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	786	852	659	257	656	186	62	54

Table D. Percent Change and Direction of Change from Aspiration to Expectation for Southern Youth, by Occupational Level and SES

Occupational Level	WHITE MALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO MALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	-23.1	-17.2	-17.6	- 1.6	-14.5	-33.5	+ 4.5	-12.4
High	-30.9	-26.2	- 3.0	-33.6	-13.6	-17.1	+32.8	0
Moderate	- 6.5	+19.0	+13.4	+32.9	-15.2	+38.7	-57.2	-25.2
Low	+117.9	+116.7	+114.5	+231.2	+72.0	+44.8	+136.1	+396.4

Occupational Level	WHITE FEMALES Socio-Economic Status				NEGRO FEMALES Socio-Economic Status			
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
	Percent							
Very High	-37.4	-34.4	-30.5	-22.1	-19.7	-25.5	+25.8	- 8.6
High	-73.7	-69.9	-46.7	-67.3	-47.3	-41.5	-69.8	-66.7
Moderate	-12.0	- 8.1	- 8.6	+45.9	+ 0.3	- 1.4	+ 1.6	+ 1.6
Low	+164.7	+282.4	+360.0	+468.4	+86.3	+108.0	+22.8	+174.1